

Center, 8283 Greensboro Drive, McLean, VA on November 25–26, 1996. The purpose of the technology symposium will be to expand the Postal Service's perspective of IBIP by including presentations from the public. Focus areas for the symposium include: indicium symbology, indicium printing, indicium scanning, and cryptography. Vendors are invited to host "demonstration/consultation areas" during the symposium.

DATES: Comments on the IBIP Host System specification will be accepted until January 27, 1997. Comments addressing intellectual property issues must be received on or before Dec. 24, 1996.

Reservations to attend the IBIP technology symposium may be made by calling Terry Goss at (202) 268–3757 or Gloria Valcin at (202) 268–5586. Reservations for attendance may be made until November 21; however, we encourage early registration as seating is limited. Reservations for "demonstration/consultation areas" at the symposium may be made by calling Katrina Snow at (703) 902–5325. Reservations for vendor space for "demonstration/consultation areas" may be made until November 15, based on space availability.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the IBIP Host System Specification may be obtained from: Terry Goss, United States Postal Service, 475 L'Enfant Plaza SW., Room 8430, Washington, DC 20260–6807. Mail or deliver written comments on the IBIP Host System specification to: Manager, Retail Systems and Equipment, United States Postal Service, 475 L'Enfant Plaza SW., Room 8430, Washington, DC 20260–6807.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Terry Goss: (202) 268–3757.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: There are approximately 1.5 million postage meters in use in the United States which collectively account for approximately \$20 billion in postal revenue annually. The manufacture and use of postage meters is governed by Postal Service regulations (see 39 CFR Part 501; Domestic Mail Manual P030). For several years USPS has been actively proposing a solution of the problem of inadequate postage meter security. To respond to the threat of fraudulent use of meters by physical tampering, USPS intends to decertify and remove from the market, in risk-driven phases, all postage meters using mechanical registers. Another problem USPS has faced is that currently available meter indicia are susceptible to counterfeiting. The Postal Service is exploring using current technology special purpose

units such as computers and independent printers to provide prepaid postage.

The Information Based Indicia Program (IBIP) is a Postal Service initiative supporting the development and implementation of a new form of postage indicia. USPS envisions that the new indicium standard may eventually support new or existing products and services. Specific products and services have not been determined. An "IBIP Indicium" substitutes for a postage stamp or a postage meter imprint as evidence of the fact that postage has been paid on mailpieces. An "IBIP Postal Security Device" provides cryptographic signature, financial accounting, indicium creation, device authorization, and audit functions. An "IBIP Host System" provides the interface between functions performed by the IBIP Postal Security Device and the IBIP Indicium.

The goal for IBIP is to provide an environment in which customers can apply postage through new technologies that improve postal revenue security. The IBIP indicia is expected eventually to replace all metered postage imprints that rely on letter press printing technology. This requires a new form of postage indicia and the adoption of standards to facilitate industry investment and product development.

It is emphasized that this proposed standard is being published for comments and is subject to final definition.

Although exempt from the notice and comment requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. §§ 553 (b), (c)) regarding proposed rulemaking by 39 U.S.C. § 410 (a), the Postal Service invites public comments on the proposed specifications. Stanley F. Mires,

Chief Counsel, Legislative.

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RAILROAD RETIREMENT BOARD

Proposed Collection; Comment Request

SUMMARY: In accordance with the requirement of Section 3506 (c)(2)(A) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 which provides opportunity for public comment on new or revised data collections, the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) will publish periodic summaries of proposed data collections.

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed information collection is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including

whether the information has practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the RRB's estimate of the burden of the collection of the information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden related to the collection of information on respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Title and purpose of information collection: Application for Spouse Annuity Under the Railroad Retirement Act; OMB 3220–0042.

Section 2(c) of the Railroad Retirement Act (RRA), provides for the payment of annuities to spouses of railroad retirement annuitants who meet the requirements under the RRA. The age requirements for a spouse annuity depend on the employee's age and date of retirement and the employee's years of railroad service. The requirements relating to the annuities are prescribed in 20 CFR 216, 218, 219, 232, and 295.

The RRB uses Form AA–3, Application for Spouse/Divorced Spouse Annuity, to obtain the information needed to determine an applicant's entitlement to an annuity and the amount of the annuity. Completion is required to obtain a benefit. One response is requested of each respondent.

The RRB proposes to revise Form AA–3 to add items that secure information pertaining to the direct deposit of benefits and Medicare processing and delete items no longer required. Language required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, will be added as well as other minor cosmetic and editorial changes. The RRB estimates that 10,800 AA–3's are completed annually at an estimated completion time of 33 to 58 minutes per response. Total respondent burden is estimated at 5,982 hours.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR COMMENTS:

To request more information or to obtain a copy of the information collection justification, forms, and/or supporting material, please call the RRB Clearance Officer at (312) 751–3363. Comments regarding the information collection should be addressed to Ronald J. Hodapp, Railroad Retirement Board, 844 N. Rush Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611–2092. Written comments should be received within 60 days of this notice.

Chuck Mierzwa,

Clearance Officer.

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